

To: Appropriations Committee
From: Yujin Jung, Former Client
Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Inc.
Date: February 9, 2010
Re: Funding for legal services

My name is Yujin Jung. I was a client at Greater Hartford Legal Aid for domestic violence. They helped me in both family and immigration cases. Today, I am testifying in support of legal services so that they can continue to receive the funding that they need to continue their great work.

When I came to the United States, I left my family, friends, and my degree as an architect in Korea to be a good wife and support my husband. He was here advancing his career, and he brought me over. After arriving here we had our daughter and I had to put everything else aside to raise our child. Throughout our marriage my husband was very abusive, both physically and emotionally. He treated me like I was less than human and he had no respect for me. Since I did not know the language or the culture very well here, I did not know my rights and was forced to endure it. We often had to move to different parts of the country because of either his career or his misbehavior, and my daughter and I had to constantly adapt to new places and try to make new friends. This made it very difficult for me to find supports and resources. Every time I started to get familiar with the new place, he would ruin things again.

After moving to Connecticut, the abuse worsened and I was forced to seek help from the police, shelter program advocates, and from Legal Aid. My husband was very angry about getting arrested and was refusing to support me or my daughter. The people at Legal Aid treated me with respect and dignity. I don't know what I would have done without them. The attorneys there helped me to get child support, Section 8, and to obtain legal status here in the U.S. But most importantly, they helped my daughter and me to be safe. At that time, I was simply a housewife. I did not know how the court system worked or what the procedures were. I felt completely lost and confused. But I was able to trust my attorneys at Legal Aid because I knew that they were not simply helping me for the money. They always did what was best for me, and they were always there to help me with whatever I needed.

Now, I understand my rights and I know that I never have to endure that type of abuse again. That's why I ask you to please support funding to legal services so that they can continue to protect victims of family violence like me. Thank you.